



State of California
The Natural Resources Agency
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

PROJECT TITLE	43 Ranch Equipment and Crew Training Site		
PROJECT LOCATION	43 Ranch, 65624 Los Lobos Rd, San Ardo, CA	COUNTY	Monterey
LEAD AGENCY	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
CONTACT	Jonathan Pangburn, Forester I		
ADDRESS	2221 Garden Rd. Monterey, CA 93940	PHONE	(831) 333-2600

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project will allow the use of mechanical and hand tools for training purposes. This project will reduce brush fuel loading in pockets on the 43 Ranch, in San Ardo. The project will also include hose lays and hiking. This project is a training area for wildland firefighters. The project area encompasses 850 acres, of which approximately 300 acres are designated for bulldozer training. Activities within the remaining 550 acres will be limited to crew chainsaw training, involving limbing and bucking up brush. Hand crew line construction may also take place in the 300-acre bulldozer area.

The project area is hilly, with some areas having slopes greater than 30%. Many areas are relatively flat, though, such as mesas and the bottoms of the hills. The vegetation community is grass and oak woodland, with scattered brush in pockets. Much of the area is comprised of interior live oak (*Quercus wislizenii*) as the canopy species for the woodland areas.

While the entire project area encompasses 850 acres, the annual training will be relatively small. Engine company training will impact less than an acre per day, with approximately 30 days of training per year. Even the areas impacted by engine companies will not be entire acres, but will be small areas for tool use, hiking, and hoselays. Bulldozer training, while technically allowed within the 300-acre area, will impact a small area each year. Approximately 20 acres total, each year, will receive impacts in the form of compaction from tracking, and topsoil disturbance due to dozerline creation. A maximum of 50 acres will be treated annually.

EXEMPTION STATUS

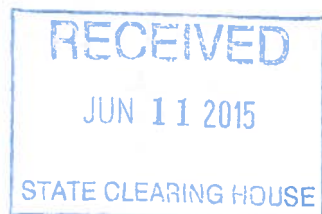
- ☒ **Categorical Exemption** Type/Section: Class 4 §15304 Minor Alterations to Land
☐ **Statutory Exemption** (state code section):
☐ **Ministerial** (§21080(b)(1); 15268)
☐ **Declared Emergency** (§21080(b)(3); 15269(a))
☐ **Emergency Project** (§21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c))


REASONS PROJECT IS EXEMPT

This project fits under portions of Class 4 Categorical Exemption described in state law (14 CCR Section 15304) pertaining to minor alterations to land, will not have a significant effect on the environment, and is exempt from the provisions of CEQA.

Field review by CAL FIRE staff confirmed that no exceptions apply which would preclude the use of a Notice of Exemption for this project. The Department has concluded that no significant environmental impact would occur to aesthetics, agriculture and forestland/timberland, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use planning, mineral resources, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation/traffic, or to utilities and service systems. Documentation of the environmental review completed by the Department is kept on file at CAL FIRE's San Benito-Monterey Unit Headquarters.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING



 6/10/15
Duane Shintaku, Deputy Director Date
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection